

THE OTHER SIDE OF COIN

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14. ABSTRACT Throughout its history, The United States has fought insurgencies. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries these insurgencies were primarily waged internally, first for independence, then for States' rights, and then by North American tribes as a result of the Monroe Doctrine and westward expansionism. During the end of the nineteenth and the entire twentieth century, as the US extended its hegemonic tendrils, it faced "classic" insurgencies in nations around the world such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and El Salvador. As a result the US developed counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies. But these COIN strategies, much like the US strategies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were focused, for the most part, on military operations and largely ignored the other elements of power in successfully defeating insurgencies. Due to the complexity of twenty-first century insurgencies, it is time to fully engage and integrate all US agencies in the COIN effort in order to ensure that the other elements of power are effectively and decisively engaged in defeating the global insurgency that the US and its allies face today and will face in the future. Rather than having the lead in COIN, the military should be an equal partner to the diplomatic, informational and economic elements of power.					
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Throughout its history, The United States has fought insurgencies. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries these insurgencies were primarily waged internally, first for independence, then for States' rights, and then by North American tribes as a result of the Monroe Doctrine and westward expansionism.

During the end of the nineteenth and the entire twentieth century, as the US extended its hegemonic tendrils, it faced "classic" insurgencies in nations around the world such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and El Salvador. As a result the US developed counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies. But these COIN strategies, much like the US strategies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, were focused, for the most part, on military operations and largely ignored the other elements of power in successfully defeating insurgencies.

Due to the complexity of twenty-first century insurgencies, it is time to fully engage and integrate all US agencies in the COIN effort in order to ensure that the other elements of power are effectively and decisively engaged in defeating

the global insurgency that the US and its allies face today and will face in the future. Rather than having the lead in COIN, the military should be an equal partner to the diplomatic, informational and economic elements of power.

THE OTHER SIDE OF COIN

This paper will explore the past and current US COIN doctrine and will demonstrate the need for full interagency integration of COIN efforts. In addition, this paper will recommend options for “leveling the interagency playing field” in relations to winning the Global War on Terror.

The US Government has faced insurgencies since its inception, yet has forgotten the value of incorporating and synchronizing all elements of power in order to develop effective counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Instead, the US national Security Strategy relies primarily on military forces and sometimes adds “token” diplomatic, informational, or economic efforts. Until The US uses a truly integrated approach to COIN that applies equally to all elements of power, the US will not defeat twenty-first century insurgencies.

The United States is no stranger to insurgency, yet when one mentions counterinsurgency, the image of conflict in Iraq immediately comes to mind. By definition, an insurgency is “an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict”¹ Sound familiar? It should, our founding fathers led an insurgency and defeated the world’s super power of the time, Great Britain. What led to the victory and creation of the United States of America? Simply put, Britain did not understand how to wage a counterinsurgent war, while the “insurgent” leaders of the self declared fledging nation understood counterinsurgency (albeit on the other side of COIN) better than possibly even today’s US leadership.

The founding fathers quickly, although reluctantly, identified the need for an insurgency to gain outside support. As early as February 1776, John Adams recognized the importance of forming an alliance with France and Spain, even ahead of “declaring independency”² Interestingly enough, the “insurgency “of 1776, was not the first time citizens of colonial America rose to insurrection. Between the years of 1645 and 1775, there were eighteen insurrections and 119 riots against the established government.³ During those ninety years, some colonists began to understand the importance of the elements of power. Certainly by 1776, key leaders such as John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin understood that without diplomacy, informational efforts, military action, and economic help, independence was doomed.

Although France and Holland had smuggled arms to the rebelling colonists since the beginning of the War for Independence, these nations would not support in an overt manner until the United States demonstrated that it had a chance to survive. Once the military demonstrated its capability to go “toe to toe”, with a British force and won at the Battle of Saratoga, the diplomatic efforts to gain military support from France and financial support from Holland were assured with France declaring war with Great Britain in 1778, and Spain and Holland followed suit in 1779 and 1780 respectively.⁴

The Informational element of power was not lost on the founding fathers either. Thomas Paine’s writings stirred the emotions of colonists while the words of Thomas Jefferson found within the Declaration of Independence, “...severed the last strand of colonial allegiance.”⁵

Although it is apparent that the initial struggle and uprising had no formal insurgency strategy, as stated earlier, by 1776 at least some of the founding fathers had a rudimentary idea of what the strategy should look like. Others simply did what came naturally, and in many instances followed what today is called terrorist tactics. The battle really became loyalist against patriot (or rebel), and citizens were attacked, properties ransacked, dissenters punished and government offices closed. In fact, closing or making local government operations ineffective is a major aspect to ensuring success of an insurgency.⁶

One caveat to the founding fathers attitudes toward an insurgency is that George Washington's effort to wage war was in the typical European manner of fighting conventionally. Although he early on established rifle regiments that fought in the stereotypical manner often associated with colonial warfare, he clearly wished to defeat the British army in a conventional force on force victory and apparently did not approve of the guerilla warfare of others such as Daniel Morgan and Francis Marion.⁷

By the end of the American Revolution, The United States of America was the subject matter expert on waging a successful insurgency and by default was probably the best source for counterinsurgency strategy.

Eighty four years later, during the American Civil War, the Confederate States of America attempted to gain support from Great Britain through diplomatic channels yet were unsuccessful, for two primary reasons. First, slavery was already illegal in Britain and secondly, much like France during the

American Revolution, Britain was waiting for an indication that the Confederacy could win before committing active support.

On the other side of the battlefield, Lincoln used the informational element to great effect with the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address. In fact, as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Civil War changed from a war about states' rights into a "...moral crusade against slavery."⁸ In addition, by waging a war of attrition and blockades, the north weakened the south by utilizing the economic element of power.

Yet after the Civil War, national strategy changed with regard to the American Indian. During the late 1860s through 1890, The US often found itself in a compromising position. Treaties were signed and broken due to greed and ambiguity, Bureau of Indian Affairs and its agents were responsible for the administration of the reservations, while the Army was expected to enforce policy thereby leaving the counterinsurgency effort to the military alone.⁹

As The United States entered the twentieth century, it also began to deal with "classic" insurgencies such as the Philippines and Vietnam and dealt with these insurgencies with a "military first" strategy. In addition, during the 1980s the US became involved with other insurgencies such as Afghanistan, Nicaragua and El Salvador using means other than the military.

Although one can argue that other elements of power were used to combat the classic insurgencies of the Philippines and Vietnam, there was never a fully integrated effort to synchronize the use of all elements. For example, during the US involvement in Vietnam, prior to US military intervention, the US

did aid the French war against the Viet Minh. In fact by 1954, the US was funding 78% of French military operations in Vietnam.¹⁰ In addition, after the Geneva Accords were signed ending the French intervention in Vietnam and temporarily dividing the country in half, the US waged a diplomatic effort to postpone elections in order to prevent the Viet Minh from controlling the entire nation, setting the stage for eventual US military intervention.

The CIA also attempted to establish anti-Viet Minh operations in North Vietnam during this time to no avail. During the US military involvement in Vietnam, the CIA would continue to conduct covert operations (in a military manner) while the military (GEN William Westmoreland), attempted to win the war using only US forces with no aid from the South Vietnamese Army.¹¹

There appears to have been a CIA led attempt to wage an interagency counterinsurgency operation during Vietnam. This attempt was executed by creating strategic hamlets. During this operation, 67% of the rural population was moved to approximately 6,800 strategic hamlets. This required military, diplomatic, and economic actions. Although a dismal failure due to ineffectual South Vietnamese forces assigned to defend the hamlets, and poor informational efforts, it was essentially the first attempt to synchronize most elements of power to conduct a counterinsurgency.

After Vietnam, the US withdrew from any potential insurgency involvement until the 1980s when the Reagan Administration viewed Nicaragua and El Salvador as Soviet attempts to gain a foothold on the American continent. As a result, "...the United States gave strong moral and political support to the

threatened governments, increased military and economic assistance, established a counterinsurgency training program for the Salvadoran military, and dispatched advisers to the area.”¹²

It was during the 1980s that the US engaged in an effective counterinsurgency program within Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and El Salvador known as the “three ‘As’ (aid, advice, and arms).”¹³ These three “As” were essentially operations that did not directly involve military operations and offered valuable lessons learned that were forgotten twenty years later.

After El Salvador, US tenets of COIN followed the three “As” model focusing less on military and more on other elements. Then national strategy focus shifted. The cold war ended, the US and its coalition partners had won Desert Shield/Desert Storm in a spectacular manner, and by September 11, 2001 the valuable COIN lessons learned in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and El Salvador were either forgotten or neglected.

In fact, it has been said that most Army officers knew more about the American Civil War than they did about counterinsurgency.¹⁴ Unfortunately not only had Army officers not learned the “best practices” of COIN, but the leaders within other agencies seemed to have quickly forgotten or never learned them either as evidenced by the ineffective efforts of Operation Restore Hope and the failed attempt to capture Mohammed Farah Aidid in Somalia during the early 1990s.

Operation Restore Hope was a US led- U.N. military operation supported by Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic elements (DIME) of power.

The objective was to save a starving nation and disarm the insurgents that stole the food from the general population. However, from a US perspective it was a military operation first- supported by a secret diplomatic mission. This was a prime example of how not to conduct COIN.

In a typical post- El Salvador fashion, there was no coordination between the military element and the diplomatic element. In fact, during Operation Restore Hope before and during the Battle of Mogadishu while Task Force Ranger was attempting to capture Aidid and his cohorts, the Clinton Administration developed a plan to negotiate with Aidid unbeknownst to DoD.¹⁵

The lack of a comprehensive COIN doctrine became readily apparent during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and in 2006 the Army and Marine Corps jointly published FM 3-24, the Counterinsurgency manual. Although the manual is a step in the right direction and talks about the importance of interagency cooperation, it is still only a military manual.

In the National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2006, the road to an integrated DIME effort was set forth. The Bush Administration established within the Department of State an Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. While this is a good start since the NSS further defines the roles and responsibilities of this office- to “plan and execute *civilian* stabilization and reconstruction efforts. The office draws on all agencies of the government and *integrates its activities with our military’s efforts* (emphasis added)”¹⁶. There are two weaknesses with this concept; first, the way this paragraph is written, makes it plain that the military effort and the civilian effort are still not one and the same.

In order to promote true unity of effort this must change. Secondly, an office within the DoS is the right location for such a function; however, its focus is too narrow. By taking it a step further and making it the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Counterinsurgency, it could coordinate *all* counterinsurgency operations.

Obviously there are times when military action must remain the priority- but a linkage with the other elements must remain. This is primarily true when insurgents take on a more conventional warfare strategy.¹⁷ What is critical is the recognition of the fact- to paraphrase Ralph Peters- that Clausewitz's statement that "war is simply a continuation of policy with other means" never was true for the United States. Instead, Peters strongly argues that for the US, war means that policy failed. Peters goes on to say that- "[e]lsewhere, the competition between governments, cultures, civilizations, and religions is viewed as comprehensive and unceasing, and it is waged- instinctively or consciously- with all the available elements of power... The conundrum is that our military strength makes our policy-makers lazy. Neglectful of other instruments and means of national power, they inevitably find themselves forced to resort to military solutions."¹⁸

The bottom line is that the US approach to COIN must change sooner rather than later, and with the current administration's approach to "Overseas Contingency Operations" now is as good a time as any.

To better understand the requirements of DIME COIN, and in order to succeed in today's environment, one must first understand how insurgencies have changed during the twenty-first century.

Since the end of World War Two, the world has seen constant conflict. In fact, according to Bard E. O'Neill, there are approximately eight wars going on around the globe at any given time and most of these conflicts are insurgencies.¹⁹ As O'Neill also states, insurgencies are not new, in fact they date back to early recorded history and nations such as Rome dealt with insurgencies regularly.

There are also many reasons for insurgencies. These insurgency catalysts range from weak central government, class struggle, religion, cultural differences, governments led by a differing group than the insurgents, or economic reasons.²⁰ Within an Insurgency there are essentially three stages; 1) the political stage- this is the establishment of legitimacy or the right to speak for the people, 2) destruction of the current government and the insurgency becoming the government, and 3) military action.²¹

In his book, *Violent Politics- a history of Insurgency, Terrorism, and Guerilla Warfare, From the American Revolution to Iraq*, William Polk writes of his studies of the Vietnam war, that the three phases of insurgency are quantified as: the political element comprises 80% of the process, the elimination of the existing government as 15%, and the military element only comprises 5% of a successful insurgency.²² Based on Polk's observations and reinforced by history, the US typically focuses its priority of effort on 5% of the problem. Conversely,

David Galula (1919-1967) world renowned counterinsurgent authority, believed that at least 80% of COIN was political and 20% military action.²³ Either way, the political piece is by far the majority element.

A successful insurgency also requires outside help. This is demonstrated by the American Revolution's French intervention, China and the Soviet Union's support of North Vietnam, French Indochina, etc..²⁴ Two other keys to a successful insurgency are "balance of interests and the balance of will".²⁵ In other words, who has more at stake- the insurgent or the counterinsurgent and who has the larger portion of the will of the people? Will is another area that the US tends to miscalculate. The US leadership often overestimates American will to accept US casualties and contend with a "long war" while underestimating the will of the insurgency and its will to accept casualties and contending with a drawn out conflict. In addition, insurgencies may look at weakening American will as a means to achieving victory when they may not be able to successfully defeat the US in their home nation²⁶- particularly in this age of instant communication.

With the dawn of a new century came a new era of insurgency- this insurgency was the result of globalization. Although globalization caused a reduction of "overt state sponsorship, and the nesting of insurgency within complex conflicts associated with state weakness or failure [,]"²⁷ it has also brought forth new problems. The instant age of information brings a transparency to COIN efforts that were never before possible. The internet and cellular

telephones allow instant communication, as does the advent of 24/7 news coverage.

In addition, although overt state sponsorship of insurgencies has reduced, the covert sponsorship of insurgencies has continued or even increased and interestingly enough, insurgencies in many ways have taken a business-like approach. In some extreme cases, 21st century insurgencies differ from 20th century ones in that they do not expect to win, but to merely survive.²⁸ Another difference between earlier insurgencies and 21st century insurgencies is the fact that there are organizations such as Al Qaeda that seek global influence and look deliberately for weak or failing states to infiltrate and attack.²⁹

The US has been at war for almost eight years, but is it war against global terror or war against global insurgency? One can argue that terrorism is a tactic and therefore one can not wage war against it and that insurgencies use terrorism to effect change.³⁰ In his Parameters Autumn 2008 article, Daniel S. Roper, convincingly argues that the US needs to re-examine its use of terminology when dealing with not only the Global War on Terror but on the global insurgents as well. The media has continually called the insurgents “jihadists”. According to Roper, this is a misinterpretation of the term Jihad and he states that Jihad actually refers to a “legitimate intense devotion to do good works according to Islam[,]” and not the act of waging holy war.³¹ Roper goes on to recommend that in order to correct this mistaken identity that these global insurgents are given the name of hiribahists- an Arabic term that means the forbidden killing of civilians.³²

Standardizing terminology across agencies is critical and must occur in order to fully integrate and synchronize COIN efforts. As Roper points out, Departments of State and Defense have differing definitions of terrorism and insurgency as does Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency.³³ By getting away from fighting a war on terror and focusing on a global insurgency as Roper recommends, a “strategic clarity” becomes possible, since one can attack people easier than one can attack an act.³⁴

With a new administration comes an opportunity to define an appropriate COIN strategy, yet despite President Obama changing the name of the war from “Global War on Terror” to “Overseas Contingency Operations”³⁵ and the fact that he has promised to have the military out of Iraq by 2011³⁶, it appears that his strategy is not that much different from President Bush’s.³⁷ In fact, with the Obama Administration’s focus on Afghanistan and a relook at Pakistan, he is demonstrating that the change that was promised is simply more of the same.³⁸

The US must learn to incorporate DIME into COIN sooner rather than later and now is an opportune time to make the required changes and as the President Obama Administration passes its 100th day in office, it is obvious that this change is becoming more and more unlikely. This is unfortunate because with President Obama following in President Bush’s footsteps with regards to continuing to fight the global insurgency, the Republicans would support his measures and with the Democrats strong support of President Obama and his efforts, this could allow a bi-partisan approach to COIN and that could only help.

Also, with the incorporation of the Department of State's (DoS) Civilian Response Corps³⁹ (CRC) into COIN as well as the current state of the economy, DoS could mobilize a large population of subject matter experts in almost any arena needed to take a civilian lead.

No longer would the military have to build schools, roads and dams, repair electrical power plants, water and sewer systems or train police forces- all while securing the areas. The CRC could do all of the civil engineering and first response activities and allow the military to do its job. If the President spent some of the economic stimulus package on hiring a robust Civilian Response Corps (CRC) and re-allocated some of the defense budget that Secretary of Defense Gates saved by ending further F-22 purchases and delaying fielding of Future Combat Systems (FCS) vehicles, to fund the additional resources needed,⁴⁰ he would set the stage for a DIME integrated COIN environment. However, diverting this funding would require a postponement of F-35 purchases and any immediate development of FCS vehicles.

But with the current global environment, and the fact that no other nation can currently stand up to the US militarily, the need for these future combat systems is not an immediate issue. In fact, given the level of conventional threat and an integration of interagency COIN operations, it is possible to reduce and reorganize the ground forces in order to provide flexibility and still meet any large scale threat while better responding to the unconventional threat.⁴¹ This would afford another, although unpopular means to gain funding to support DIME COIN. The paradigm shift here is to recognize that DoD, until the publication of

FM 3-24, has long held that "...armies trained to win large conventional wars are automatically prepared to win small, unconventional ones."⁴² This is no longer the case and the idea of continuing to fund DoD to win battles rather than wars through the continuous funding of expensive "hi-tech" systems must transition to the holistic method of an interagency COIN process and the recognition that sometimes the best weapons on the planet are sometimes good enough.⁴³

Yet opponents of this argument will say that there is no need to fully integrate DIME into COIN and they will cite the success the military has seen during the surge in Iraq. Although the military has done an extraordinary job in Iraq and the COIN environment there, they have done so at what cost?

The other thing to keep in mind is that this is a global issue and there are other players. Initiating a proper national COIN strategy will help in changing the US image across (the rational part of) the globe. FM 3-24 states in paragraph 1-121 that- "NGOs often play an important role at the local level. Many such agencies resist being overtly involved with military forces...The most important connections are those with joint, interagency, multinational, and HN organizations." How much easier would this synchronization be with other than the military in the lead role? Giving the lead to a political appointee adds accountability to the process and encourages multi-lateral involvement.⁴⁴

The other positive outcome of a true interagency process is that it reduces the complexity during a crisis since there is unity of effort as well as unity of command.⁴⁵ In addition, FM 3-24 recognizes that legitimacy of the host nation as well as security of the civilian populace are other key ingredients⁴⁶ to the

equation and will aid in changing the image of the US from a conquering occupation force to one that uses the military only for protection of the populace- and only until host nation forces can assume the security role- while civilian organizations are conducting the higher profile missions.⁴⁷ Legitimacy of government and security of the populace are also critical because victory in COIN begins from within the affected nation/state. But this becomes problematic as many states, as evidenced by Iraq, may take years to stabilize themselves both economically and administratively.⁴⁸

All Elements of Power own parts of integrated DIME COIN- but who owns what? DoS has the lead in the 80% political piece, however, it does not own it all. Within the political piece one can further break out the diplomatic, economic and information elements. Within the diplomatic element, one can add the reconstruction and stabilization piece, taking it off the plate of the military and adding it to the CRC plate.⁴⁹

Information is a critical element of power in today's global environment- The role of the media, internet and cellular telephones continues to increase. There are two aspects of the information element- Information/intelligence collection and information dissemination. The information collection is owned by Department of Homeland Security, CIA, FBI, and DoD.

Who owns the information dissemination? Although DoD has an Information Processing Techniques Office within its Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), there seems to be no central office of information. If one "Googles" office of Information, one can find Office of Information and

Regulatory Affairs or Office of Information Technology, but no Office of Information designed to support the Information Element. This is disconcerting to say the least. Since the element of power is instrumental to the “information age” and the US ability to synchronize all DIME efforts, not just COIN efforts. “This information environment favors the enemy’s strengths and exploits [US] vulnerabilities (truth, bureaucratic layers and clearances, real time press reporting, etc.).”⁵⁰

The economic piece is a bit more black and white- although there are several players in this one element to include: the President of The United States (POTUS), Congress, Treasury Department, and DoS. All of these entities must contribute to the development of an internal economic strategy as well as an economic strategy that supports COIN. The National Security Strategy, talks about the importance of a global economic growth and mentions the Administration’s role but does not actually identify the owner of this element.⁵¹ But the Treasury Department should own the economic element. There is an Office of International Affairs within the Department of the Treasury which currently holds US-China Strategic Economic Dialogues and tracks and targets Al Qaida support networks among other international economic efforts.⁵²

Obviously there are challenges to address when discussing DIME COIN, but it is the way ahead and these challenges are not insurmountable- although some may be unpopular. During this economically challenged period, every agency will want to hang on to the budgets they have and will not want to discuss paradigm shifts, but it is time to make the changes. FM 3-24 recognizes the need

to integrate DIME into COIN as does DoS to a lesser degree, but the resources must back it up.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Some recommendations for integrating DIME into COIN are as follows:

The National Security Strategy (NSS) must reflect an integrated DIME effort. As Colin S. Gray articulates within his article, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*; the US "...has shown a persisting strategy deficit, which reflects and feeds a political deficit in its way of war."⁵³ One way to fully incorporate DIME into the NSS is to possibly add annexes that contain a National Diplomatic/Political Strategy, a National Information Strategy, and a National Economic Strategy (much like Clinton's 1992 strategy⁵⁴) as well as the National Defense Strategy. These annexes should also clearly articulate what department or agency owns each element of power.

In addition, the DIME COIN should have a civilian lead by establishing an office within the Department of State such as expanding the Office of Stabilization and Reconstruction by adding COIN to its responsibilities. The US ambassador and host nation leaders must participate in the planning stage of this effort with liaisons provided at every level.⁵⁵ NGOs are also crucial to this piece of the COIN and must not be forgotten. The challenge for this concept is to decentralize- while maintaining unity of command and unity of effort which are key to the success of the concept. But with today's communications technology

and the progress between interagency cooperation already, that is entirely possible.

The military is no longer the focal point of COIN, instead it becomes subordinate to the political element and the effort reflects Galula's 80% political and 20% military.

Funding must reflect strategy and approach - this is particularly imperative to DIMEing COIN. Budgets must shift, and DoS' budget must allow for building a large and viable Civilian Response Corps even at the expense of DoD. By allowing a civilian stabilization and reconstruction pool, the military can focus on the war-fight/security piece and reduce its presence and even the size of the force.

The US should also establish an Office of Information with a focus on the information element of power. In today's environment of instant communication, the information piece is as crucial as the other elements yet is an oft forgotten step-child of the others.

Bilateral support is crucial unless the US is willing to accept that it will remain unpopular and perceived as an imperialistic hegemon. COIN efforts are best served when there is a strong multi-lateral coalition involved as is evidenced by Bosnia and Kosovo.⁵⁶

The risk of incorporating DIME into COIN is probably moderate at best. This is primarily due to the significant paradigm shift and the need for some departments of the US government to relinquish resources to other departments and the parochialism within those departments and the reluctance to change. If

DIME COIN is not fully embraced, the second and third order effects could result in even less efficiency and an increased level of parochial walls between departments than are currently in place. It will take strong leadership at all levels to make this work, however, once institutionalized, operations will be more efficient.

CONCLUSION

The path forward is clear; the US must incorporate and synchronize all elements of power into the counterinsurgency fight. By using the 80-20 split identified by David Galula, 20% of the counterinsurgency fight is up to the military while the rest belongs to the political piece, to include the economic and information elements. In concert with this, the US populace must understand that the global insurgency will take time to defeat and the populace must get out of the “sound-bite culture” in order to ensure continued success. This will require an even larger piece of the information element to get engaged at the home front. The role of information must expand even beyond the home front and the affected host nations. Due to the internet, and instant media coverage, there are serious challenges ahead in the information realm. This is also true in the element of economics, with the current economic crisis. Not only does the US face a challenge in funding COIN, but the host nations will find themselves stretched even thinner as a result of declining revenue.

The key to winning in COIN is applying a synergistic approach that truly incorporates all elements of DIME appropriately. This is the only sure way of winning a COIN operation.

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